

From: [Tony Arranaga](#)
To: [Tony Arranaga](#)
Subject: Councilmember O'Farrell Letter on Playground Motion
Date: Thursday, December 29, 2016 3:05:04 PM
Attachments: [16-1456_mot_12-14-2016.pdf](#)
[Letter from Mitch 12.29.2016.pdf](#)

Reporters:

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell issued the following letter today following news reports on his

proposal to enhance public safety at children's play areas in our City parks.

I've attached the letter to this email. Please feel free to share content with readers/viewers.

Please contact me with any questions.

Best,

Tony

December 29, 2016

Friends:

Earlier this month, I introduced a motion that will start the process to discuss ways to make children's play areas within city-owned parks even safer. Despite what news outlets have been incorrectly reporting, **I want to reassure you--this is NOT a ban on adults without children from using our parks.** This proposal is limited and affects a small area of a park. I want all Angelenos to enjoy our recreational facilities, and I especially want our children and their families to feel safe in any environment.

This proposal stems from an existing state law (CA Penal Code 653b) which prohibits the

presence of unauthorized adults unaccompanied by a child in schools or public spaces. The City Attorney advises that we need to craft local policy to effectuate the intent of the state law to include our city parks, which is why I introduced a motion that directs the City Attorney, along with the assistance of the Department of Recreation and Parks, to provide recommendations for consideration of an ordinance that limits access to play areas to children and their accompanying parents/guardians and/or caregivers, with some exceptions. **To be clear, this proposal only applies to the space inside the designated children's play areas, and nowhere else.**

Children's play areas in City parks are usually delineated by a perimeter gate or fence. These specific areas would be clearly marked with signage stating the limited access.

As City leaders, we owe this to our youngest Angelenos, to create safe spaces for them. Other municipalities such as Santa Monica, New York City, Miami Beach, and Hollywood (Florida) have adopted similar laws to enhance child safety and provide law enforcement with clear regulations as to who may be present in a playground designed for toddlers and small children. Our park facilities should be a safe haven, and we must do our part to provide the proper shelter for our kids.

In my district, I have received complaints of drug deals taking place in our kids' play areas, and other disturbing behaviors. This is unacceptable, and I will take every precaution possible to send a clear message that this type of illegal activity is not welcome at our neighborhood park facilities.

The topic of playground safety is already generating robust conversation, and there will be several opportunities for you to add to the discussion at the Board of Recreation and Parks Commission, the City Council Arts, Parks, and Los Angeles River Committee, as well as the full City Council.

I want to hear your thoughtful concerns and listen to suggestions that may make this proposal more meaningful to park users, especially the children of Los Angeles. Please contact me by email at councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org.

Warm regards,

MITCH O'FARRELL

Councilmember, 13th District

--



Tony Arranaga

Communications Director

Office of Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell

200 N. Spring Street, Room 480, Los Angeles, CA 90012

[\(213\) 473-7013](tel:(213)473-7013) w| [\(213\) 258-9533](tel:(213)258-9533) c| www.cd13.org

